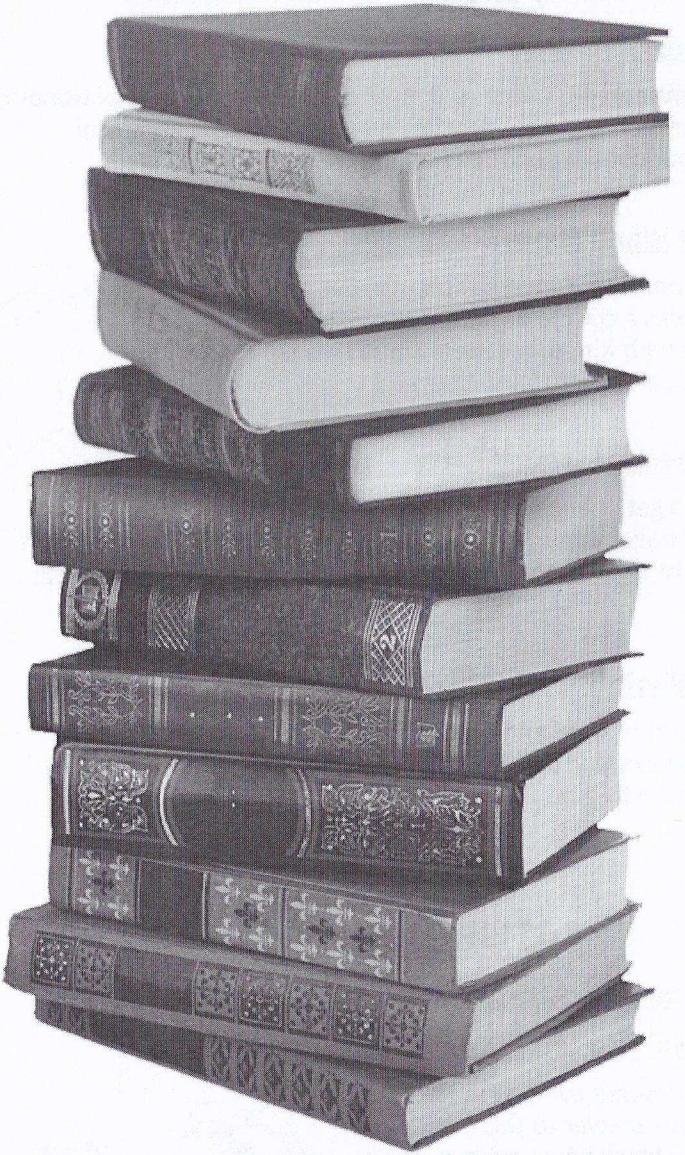


NOVACON 48

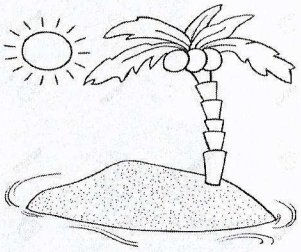
READ ME

FRIDAY

19:00 **Opening Ceremony**

Welcome to **Novacon 48**. Come and meet our fabulous Guest of Honour, Chris Beckett, the committee and hear any last-minute updates and useful information to make your convention more enjoyable.

19:30 **Desert island Books**



Our Guest of Honour in conversation with Eve Harvey. Which books (plus a couple of pieces of music) would Chris like to take with him to a desert island? And why they're so special to him.

21:00 **Chris Beckett Launch Party**

Come along and get your own signed copy of Chris's latest acclaimed novel, *America City*; plus, the latest releases of the *Dark Eden* trilogy and *Holy Machine*. Free wine and nibbles provided by your caring committee.

22:30 **Am I Who?***

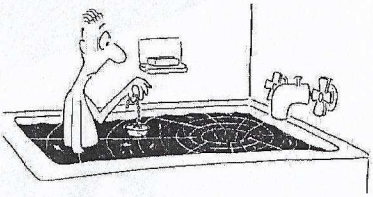
We may all be a little tired and emotional after all the travelling and free booze, so we'll finish the evening with a simple game: an SF-themed version of Who am I? where you have to guess who you are.

*You see what we did there?

SATURDAY

10:00 **Professor Tony Padilla:**

Black Holes & Extra Dimensions

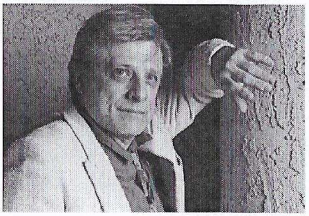


Why does the Universe even exist? Physicists believe that the answer to this question lies deep inside black holes, where space and time is as strange and complicated as it was at the beginning, when the Universe was born. This will be a journey of discovery, from the black hole at the centre of our own galaxy, to the exotic world of string theory, extra dimensions and parallel universes. Find out what it's like to fall into a black hole, why we believe in extra dimensions, and what this all has to do with a 9-billion-dollar machine smashing things together at almost the speed of light.

11:30 **Panel: Retired Extremely Fannish**

"Why should I let the toad work squat on my life?" (Philip Larkin) Are we looking forward to retirement, so we can finally have time for all the fannish schemes we couldn't finish because work got in the way? For already retired fans – and there's more than a few at Novacon - is life working out as planned or do we need "the toad" to give us some energy?

13:00 **Panel: Harlan Ellison Foursquare for chaos**



The remarkable Harlan Ellison passed away this year. We discuss a career full of feuds, law suits, eight and half Hugos and his massive body of science fiction including some of the best known short stories in the genre. Your own reminiscences will be welcome.

14:30 **Gerry Webb: The Fermi Paradox**

Gerry is the President of the British Interplanetary Society and a popular speaker on space and science as well as a Novacon regular.

16:00 **Chris Beckett: Haunted by the Future**

Most SF is set in the 'future', though nearly always told in the past tense. But the nature of the proposed SF future varies from entirely nominal 'futures', which no one believes will ever happen, to 'futures' that are really just commentaries on the present, to serious attempts to predict what the world will be like at some near, or distant, future date. Do these different kinds of future have anything in common, and how do they connect with the future that actually comes to pass?

17:30 **Douglas Spencer, Esq.: Clanger Cuisine**

In his most recent Serious Scientific Talk, repeated from Satellite 6, Doug talks about soup and blue string pudding, and explores what we might infer about the local biology.

19:00 **Poetry Open Mike**

Chris Morgan, former Poet Laureate of Birmingham, will read some of his work and host an open microphone for all of you to bring and read your own work also. If it's SF, that's nice, but any theme is welcome. Beginners are encouraged, and the audience will be supportive.

20:30 **Panel: Science Fiction in Interesting Times**

We're already in the era that much seminal SF of the mid-twentieth century was set in. All sorts of upheavals and change were forecast, good and bad. Meanwhile we have real upheavals – political, social, climate and technological. So, how do you go about writing SF in uncertain times?

22:00 **Saturday Night with Stan and Ann**

Popular past Guests of Honour Ann & Stan Nicholls - plus guests - will discuss recent themes, events and foibles that amuse, interest, and perhaps annoy them about SF, fandom and overlapping genres.

SUNDAY

11:00 **Dr Julian Onions: Making your own universe**

SF often imagines different universes to live in, sometimes with different physical laws. Julian will talk about how astronomers build their own universes in large computers to explore the properties of our own time and space. This will range across a whole spectrum from galaxies to the entire Universe and conversely to the smaller objects in the hunt to understand what we have, what we are what is to come.

12:30 **David A Hardy: To the Stars – on a Paint Brush**

The truly gifted Dave Hardy has painted the visions of astronomers and SF writers for more than half a century, as well as his own imagination of space and science. He exhibits original work every year at **Novacon**. Here's chance to hear about his life in SF art as he talks through his career and works. If you wanted to own something by Dave, then by pure coincidence the next item is...

14:00 **Art Auction**

Chris Morgan will take your money for some fine, original and sometimes truly strange things from the art show. Remember to put your bids in early. We make no guarantees about anything self-shredding after purchase.

15:30 **Panel: Creating Imaginary Societies**

"The Imaginary" is a sociological concept for the values and symbols that we use to "imagine our social whole". Writing SF is often about making up an

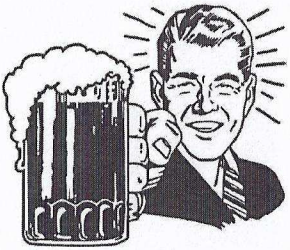
entirely new one of those! Why – and how – do SF writers do this? How difficult is it to make a different society relevant, credible and consistent? Why do some play better with SF readers than others?

17:00 **Hand Over Ceremony**

It's not a closing ceremony because **Novacon** never closes, but this year's will be over except for the inevitable beer and food (and sarcastic convention reports). Come and help us give thanks to everyone who helped make the convention possible and give out gifts and prizes. And yes, it's time for the raffle again! So please buy tickets for our good cause.

19:30 **Beer Tasting and Convention Dinner**

Our traditional end-of-convention beer tasting. Bring 3 bottles of "interesting" beer to Registration in exchange for a ticket or alternatively you can also buy a ticket for either/both beer tasting and banquet (Tex Mex this year).



Off piste:

Remember there's an **Art Show** downstairs as well as **Mr Lally's Magic Lantern Show** (New members – ask discretely).

A BOOK AUCTION will be announced if we have enough books to sell and held downstairs. It usually happens later on Saturday night when you've all had enough beer to ensure you'll bid handsomely for those Pier Anthony trilogies we didn't shift last year.

There is additional function space downstairs, so if you want to have a reading, workshop or meeting please get with the committee in the registration area who should be able to help you out if they are sober enough.

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Alright, we'll come clean, we didn't have anything to put here.

park inn by Radisson

Bar Menu

Served from 10am -10pm

Soup & Roll	**£2.95**
Baguettes	**£3.50**
Sandwiches	**£2.95**

Fillings

Ham & Cheese/Cheese & Onion Mayo/ Tuna Mayo/ Egg Mayo

9"Pizza	**£5.50**

Please choose a topping. ***(50p for additional topping)***

Cheese and Tomato/ Pepperoni & Jalapeno/Chicken & Pepper

BBQ Chicken Melt & Chips	**£5.50**
Cheeseburger & Chips	**£7.00**
Curry of the day & Rice	**£6.95**
Fish, Chips & Mushy peas	**£6.95**
Jacket Potato and choice of 2 fillings	**£5.95**

Coleslaw, Cheese, Baked beans, Chilli, Tuna Mayo,

Side Orders

Fries Garlic Bread* Salad*	**£2.00 each**
Cheesy Chips BBQ Wings*	**£3.00 each**

(V) Suitable for vegetarians. Please note that some of our dishes contain allergens or additives; please ask a member of the team and we'll be happy to explain

Prices may differ on day of convention

AT A GLANCE

	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
10.00		SCIENCE TALK BLACK HOLES	
11.00		RETIRED, EXTREMELY FANNISH	SCIENCE TALK MAKING YOUR OWN UNIVERSE
12.00		HARLAN ELLISON FOURSQUARE FOR CHAOS	DAVID A. HARDY TO THE STARS ON A PAINT BRUSH
13.00		GERRY WEBB THE FERMI PARADOX	ART AUCTION
14.00		GUEST OF HONOUR CHRIS BECKETT	CREATING IMAGINARY SOCIETIES
15.00		CLANGER CUISINE	AWARDS CEREMONY AND HAND OVER
16.00	OPENING CEREMONY	POETRY OPEN MIC	BEER TASTING AND G.O.H BANQUET
17.00	DESERT ISLAND BOOKS	INTERESTING TIMES	
18.00	BOOK LAUNCH PARTY	SATURDAY NIGHT WITH STAN AND ANN	
19.00	AM I WHO?		
20.00			
21.00			
22.00			
23.00			